

Washington, DC: At the behest of Congressman Ron Paul, several of his House colleagues, and the Ad Hoc Shrimp Trade Action Committee, the Department of Commerce recently announced that it would investigate questionable foreign shrimp industry practices. Paul and a group of congressmen, representing thousands of domestic shrimpers in Texas and Louisiana, have urged action by the Commerce Department to protect the troubled shrimp industry from subsidized, below-market imports. They recently sent a letter to Commerce Secretary Donald Evans and U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick demanding an investigation into taxpayer subsidies that benefit foreign shrimpers at the expense of our domestic industry.

The Ad Hoc Shrimp Trade Action Committee represents shrimpers in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas.

The investigations will focus on frozen and canned warmwater shrimp from Brazil, Ecuador, India, China, Thailand, and Vietnam.

“I’m pleased that an investigation is moving forward,” Paul stated. “Our domestic shrimpers have been devastated by cheap imported shrimp in recent years, shrimp that unfortunately was subsidized by U.S. taxpayers. It’s time to reduce the regulatory burdens on American shrimpers and end the subsidies to their foreign competitors.”

The Commerce Department should make its preliminary determinations in June 2004.